System of Government under the HOLY PROPHET

(Peace be upon him)

(With discussion on the method of implementing it in Pakistan today)

By

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(*Peace be upon him*)

(*Following is the full text of the Interview given to the Radio Pakistan by Maulana Syed Abul A'la Maududi. Nasir Qureshi and Abdul Waheed Khan conducted the Interview. It was recorded on the 8th and 10th March, 1978 and relayed in the National Programme on the 7th and 8th April, 1978).*

Nasir Qureshi

Leader of the Islamic movement, Maulana Syed Abul A'la Maududi! It is really a privileged moment that a representative of Radio Pakistan has the honour of being in your presence. The question which has brought us here, to seek your guidance, is that the Muslims of this divinely bestowed State of Pakistan, after thirty years of waywardness, are now trying to cling to the rope of Allah. Sir, there are, of course, many other leaders also but the state of our mental chaos is similar to a traveller who has yet to discover his guide. In order to tread the straight path we want the guidance of the Real Leader (peace be upon him) so that our faith and life are improved. Sir, the first thing I would request for is that you enlighten us about the System of Government which prevailed under the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him). Secondly, I would request you to guide us as to how could we adopt this system in the modern age. In our present-day world four aspects are taken into

account for the evaluation of a State's development:

1. *Who is the ultimate sovereign ?*
2. *What is the nature of its legislative machinery and what are its powers and limitations ?*
3. *How far is its Judiciary impartial and independent ?*
4. *What are the limits, powers and characteristics of its Executive ?*

May I request you to enlighten us about these aspects of the auspicious regime of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him). We are searching for a treasure which would enable us, not only today and tomorrow but in all ages to come, to mould our lives in accordance with the injunctions of Allah and His Prophet (peace be upon him).

Maulana Abul A'la Maududi

It is a matter of great pleasure for me that you have today provided me an opportunity to explain, to the Muslims of this country in general and to its rulers in particular, the basis and the form of government which was established by the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him).

The basic principle which the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) stressed above all else was that the ultimate sovereignty vests in Allah and none else. The earth belongs to Him. The Air, the Water, the Light and every thing which sustains our life has been provided by Him. The body we possess and all the energies and organs it is equipped with have been bestowed upon us by Him. We have no share in, or right to make a claim to, ultimate sovereignty. Nor should we accept any such claim from any individual or group. The very first

thing which the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) tried to impress on the mind of man, and invited people to believe in, was that the kingdom belongs to Allah ; He alone has the authority to command and no one except Him has the right to legislate.

The second point in his basic teachings was that the Divine Laws are not revealed to mankind directly. This is done through His Chosen Messengers. The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) was not elected by any one as ruler. Nor was he a self-made ruler. He was appointed on this office by Allah so that he could educate people, train them in the Divine Discipline, reform their minds, thought and character, communicate Divine Injunctions to them and implement the Divine Mission through those who accept and believe in the truthfulness of these injunctions.

The third essential thing which the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) demanded on behalf of Allah was that mankind believe in the concept of Life Hereafter. If one does not consider himself answerable to Allah and does not believe that he has to go one day, after his death, before his Lord and account for all his deeds, he can neither tread the path of Islam, nor can he attain nobility in character.

For thirteen years continuously the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) presented these ideas to the people of Mecca, through exhortation and preaching, and those who accepted them were organised by him into a party, a community (Ummah). During the last three years of his stay at Mecca a small group of persons from Mådina embraced Islam and they invited him to come to their city

along with his companions. The statement of Hazrat Aishah (may Allah be pleased with her) was very true when she said that Madina was conquered by the Quran. That is to say that there was no sword, no oppressive force whereby the citizens of Madina could be coerced into accepting Islam. The fact is that as soon as they had access to the Quran and came to know of the Surahs revealed at Mecca they not only accepted Islam but also extended invitation to the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) and his companions (may Allah be pleased with them) to share their small dwellings. This invitation was not meant for simply providing refuge to him. It was, instead, for making him their teacher, mentor, and ruler, as also for merging the Muslims of Medina and the Muslims of Mecca into a single community of believers to establish thereby a system of life in Madina on which this community had reposed its faith. This is how the Islamic government was founded on the very day when the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) had arrived in Madina.

The foremost function of this government was dissemination of Islamic teachings among the people, because Islam is the knowledge of divine guidance and ignorance is a hinderance in his path. The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) and his companions (may Allah be pleased with them) spent all their energies on making people understand the faith and accept it with conviction. As this knowledge spread, and the people adhered to it, the power of Islam grew steadily.

The second great task before the Holy Prophet (peace

be upon him) was the reformation of their morals and creation of a society founded upon high morality. No system of government, however mangnificent in appearance it is, and however excellent its laws, can succeed if its structure does not rest upon the firm foundation of good conduct, if its officials are not men of high character and the society in which it is introduced is not honest and God-fearing. It is for this reason that after invitation to faith and its propagation, the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) laid so much stress on piety and good conduct. The very nature of the system established by him urged that the conduct of the people conformed to the temperament of that system. Such a situation does not require the use of force for the obedience of law. It suffices to say that this thing has been ordained by Allah or prohibited by Him. After that people obey on their own. During the times of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) there were no Police. Nor was there any jail or any system of espionage. It was unthinkable that people would receive an order from the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) and disobey it. For instance we can take up the case of the prohibition of alchohol. When it was proclaimed in the city of Madina that it had been declared unlawful, the vessels full of alchohol were broken and the people immediately stopped drinking there and then. History fails to provide example of such spontaneous Obedience to law. On the contrary billions of rupees were spent in America for convincing people of the evils and ill-effects of alcohol. A mighty propaganda campaign was launched against it and with the support of public opinion an amendment was made in the

American Constitution to pass a law for its prohibition. But on the very next day after its enforcement people started violating it. People took to many kinds of poisonous drinks. This evil spread to such an extent that eventually the law was withdrawn. Let us now compare the two situations. On the one side an order is issued and it is instantly obeyed. On the other side a law is made after great preparation and prior consent of people and they violate it. It goes to prove that the foundation of a good system of government rests on faith and good conduct. Where these two things are lacking, however excellent the laws and constitution are framed on paper, they will never succeed in practice.

Nasir Qureshi

The present-day Western Democracy is based on four pillars. In what form did they exist in the days of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him)?

Maulana Abul A'la Maududi

So far as the sovereignty is concerned I have already told that according to the teachings of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) it belongs to Allah only. The division of government into three branches, as it exists today, did not exist in the order of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him). He was the Law-giver, the Judge and the Administrator at the same time. As a ruler appointed by Allah these powers were vested in his person. But the system employed by the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) was such that asked for unqualified obedience from

people in respect of Divine Injunctions. No one could dare to say a word against them. But in matters as were not explicitly mentioned by Divine Injunctions he always consulted his companions. He allowed them the right to differ and there are many instances when he preferred their opinion. One such instance is the Battle of Badr, in which one of his companions questioned him about the choice of the camp. He asked the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) whether the selection of camp was ordained by Allah or had been made by him? The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) replied that the choice had been made by him. Thereupon the companion submitted that another site would be preferable and his suggestion was accepted. It can be understood from this incident that the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) was giving two kinds of training to the believers. One was that when they received any order from Allah they should obey it without question. The second training was that in other matters, which were not covered by any Divine Injunction, competent persons should be consulted. People should also be given the right to discuss these matters openly with liberty to differ from everybody howsoever highly placed. So much so that even the opinion of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) in such matters was differed from by his companions and the issue decided by consensus.

I would like to quote here one more instance. In the Battle of Ahzab when the situation took a very serious turn, the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) wanted that some tribes whose strong forces had gathered there be offered a portion of the agricultural

produce of Madina and thereby isolated from the enemy's block. Thereupon the leaders of the Ansar tribes asked from the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) whether he had taken this decision at the commands of Allah or on his own ? He replied that it was his own decision and he wanted to take them out of danger. They said to the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) that the enemies had not been able to wrench from them a particle even before they became Muslims. How could they do it now? Consequently, this idea was discarded. It can easily be understood from this instance what was the system of government of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him). While in matters ordained by Allah there was no room for personal opinion, matters free from such injunctions were decided in a democratic manner.

Now we come to his judicial system. The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) was a judge by virtue of his Divine appointment. Hence he possessed complete judicial powers. The guiding principle concerning the judicial system was that justice should not only be done but it should be done publicly. All cases were heard in the open court. There is no precedent of secret trial in his days.

There is a famous incident in history that before the conquest of Mecca a companion of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) wrote a letter to the disbelievers and informed them of the attack that was about to be made on them. This letter was discovered. It was an obvious case of spying. The people of modern age would say that such a dangerous case should have been tried in secret but the Holy Prophet

(peace be upon him) held its public trial in a mosque. Another important feature of his judicial system was that no decision was made without hearing the parties concerned and no one was deprived of any of his rights without an opportunity of defence. The Qazis deputed outside Madina, by the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) were also instructed not to decide any suit without hearing the parties concerned. The door of recommendation in respect of judicial matters was firmly closed. After the conquest of Mecca a woman of Quraish tribe committed theft. Her family tried that she was saved from the punishment, the amputation of hand (*hadd*). The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) was approached in the matter through Hazrat Usama Bin Zaid, who was very dear to him. When he did so, the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) asked him if he wanted to intercede in the matter of Allah? Many nations in the past had perished because they made discrimination in the dispensation of justice. When their ordinary men committed offence they were punished according to law but when their respectable men did it they were treated leniently. The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) swore by Allah that had her own daughter Fatima committed theft he would have ordered the amputation of her hand also. By saying so he not only closed the door of intercession but also established the principle that all were equal before law. He also established the principle that if any one, by conceit, attains judgement from a court of law in his own favour, he could benefit from it only in this world and nothing would save him from punishment in the life Hereafter.

Next to that comes the question of legislature. Since under the system of life brought by the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him), law was fundamentally God-made and revealed by Him and He alone had the right of legislation, the position of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) was not that of a legislator but of an Administrator and elucidater of Divine Law and that of a person commissioned to educate and train people in the administration of justic in accordance with it. The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) explained the Divine Law to the people and translated it into practice which is contained in his Sunnah. For instance, there is a very brief mention of the punishment of theft in the Quran. It enjoins that the hand of thief be amputated. It does not give any detail. It is only Sunnah that tells us as to precisely how and when this order will apply and when it will not apply. It is also through Sunnah that we know what is theft and what is not theft. To what kind of goods and to what quantity it will apply and how it will be enforced. If these details were not available in Sunnah, we would not have been able to comply these orders correctly. Thus it becomes obvious that the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) was not himself a legislator. The real legislator was Allah and the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) was His official interpreter and commentator. This is how the Islamic Law is the name of the injunctions of the Quran and the Sunnah. The main features of the system, which the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) had established for the enforcement of law, were that :—

1. As far as possible, people should be saved from

punishment.

2. To err in acquitting a culprit was better than punishing an innocent man.

3. People were encouraged to settle their disputes by themselves. If any body's offence was to be pardoned, it could be done. If somebody's sin had to be overlooked, it could also be done. But all this was permissible before the matter reached a court of law.

4. Once a matter reached a court of law, it could neither be overlooked nor forgiven. Thereafter only the court could decide the matter in accordance with the law.

5. Any attempt at influencing judgment of a court was strictly forbidden by the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him). The Qazi (Judge) has been given full freedom to decide the matters in conformity with the Quran and Sunnah, at his own discretion without any fear or favour.

6. The Holy Prophet (peace by upon him) also told his followers, in this behalf, that passing judgment without knowledge or giving wrong judgment intentionally was a great sin. A true Qazi was one who possessed knowledge of law and decided matters in the light of his knowledge without fear or prejudice.

We must also bear a few other things in mind in regard to the rule of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him). If we make the modern political ideas a basis of evaluation, we will not be able to understand his regime properly. For example there are now three pillars of the modern State, *i.e.* Executive, Judiciary and Legislature. Their respective areas of authority and action are determined by the Con-

stitution.

But in those days, the position was such, that before the migration of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) to Madina, each tribe in the city had a walled compound of its own. Therein they had their lands, orchards, houses, cattle-yards and meeting place. The tribal system prevailed and members of each tribe themselves managed their own affairs.

When a large number of people from Madina pledged their allegiance at the hand of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) in Mecca, he appointed on their request, twelve such persons as their leaders who were among them more able, influential and trustworthy. Each of them was entrusted with the responsibility of keeping their conduct and affairs clean and straight and in this task they were assisted by pious and respectable persons of different families of their tribe. Such persons happened to be the chiefs in the families and tribes in natural course and were made leaders by the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) when they embraced Islam.

Later on when he migrated to Madina he still maintained this system. The difference it brought about was that the leadership shifted from the infidel Sheikhs to the believers. This change did not occur through ballot. It was a natural result of the Islamic revolution that the non-believers receded into background and the Muslim leaders came forward.

The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) used to consult the most competent persons of the Muhajireen (migrants) and the chiefs of the Ansars (locals) in conducting the affairs of the state. But this

consultation had no resemblance with the present-day legislature or parliament. Whenever need arose competent and influential persons from the Muslims, both from the Muhajireen (migrants) and Ansars (locals) were called for consultation. They were not the elected representatives of the people. But nevertheless they were so influential, popular and intelligent that had there been elections on the modern pattern they would have won it.

All of them were not necessarily invited for advice on each and every issue. Whenever any ordinary problem arose, in which advice had to be sought, those who happened to be present were consulted. In case of important matters an announcement was made and the people were summoned to the Masjid-e-Nabvi (Prophet's Mosque).

When the Islamic state began to spread beyond Madina, Governors were appointed in different areas. They were the Chief Executives as well as commanders of their respective areas. The institution of a standing army did not exist at that time.

Whenever a situation arose people joined the Jehad voluntarily. The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) had also appointed Qazis (Judges) in different localities and no governor could interfere in their work.

The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) also appointed some persons in each locality who imparted education to the people. Education did not mean reading and writing. It meant that the Quran was recited to them. Its meanings and implications were explained to them and they were acquainted with the teachings of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon

him). Most of this work was done verbally. The teachers worked for the reformation of their intellectual and moral conduct in the same manner as they had themselves been reformed by the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him). For instance when Mecca was conquered, the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) appointed Hazrat Attab Bin Asid as Governor and Hazrat Moāz Bin Jabal as teacher.

The system of Zakat was so arranged that at some places regular collectors were appointed, while on others the task was assigned to the tribal chiefs. In areas where the non-Muslim population, after their surrender, had agreed to pay ransom, no permanent tax-collector was appointed. When Khyber was conquered its Jews agreed to give half of their agriculture produce for truce. The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) sent one of his companions to them at the time of harvest. He divided the whole produce into two halves and gave the Jews an option to choose any of the two lots. History bears witness to it that when ransom was taken in that manner, the Jews cried in acclaim that this is the justice on which this whole universe depends.

This is a brief outline of the system of government under the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him).

Abdul Waheed Khan

Respected Maulana! After listening to the details you have given about the system of government of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) the question crops up that today there can neither be a person who is embodiment of virtue like the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him)

nor we have a group of such men as he had trained in the form of his own companions and Caliphs, nor that moral training is available, nor that society is there which was harnessed by the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him). Now if we intend to enforce the Islamic System in this corrupt society of ours, how shall we transform the four well-known principles of modern state into the mould of Islamic System. Secondly, what would be the method and process for converting our present corrupt society into that perfect society?

Maulana Abul A'la Maududi

The first thing to be clearly understood in this regard is that the Islamic System as such cannot be run by any dishonest and corrupt administration. A bureaucracy which does not fear Allah cannot run it. Nor can it properly function in a morally corrupt society which has lost all norms. We have lived for a long time under monarchy which did not follow perfect Islamic order. But even then Islamic Law prevailed and the task of educating the masses was done by the scholars and mystics. For this reason, despite the fact that the society was not at the level which obtained in the days of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) and his companions, the general moral standard of the people was not as low as it became afterwards. Nor the people were so ignorant of Islamic teachings as they became later. Drinking was almost unknown among the Muslims. People did commit sins but not so openly. The British authors have recorded that in the midst of 18th century, when the British Government was first established in Bengal,

the incidence of theft was negligible and hand of thief was amputated. Nobody could expect a lie from a Muslim. No Muslim would lie in a court of law. Muslims were generally educated and almost the entire community was literate. This was our condition till the end of 18th century. Later, when the British Rule was imposed our laws were changed. Our economic system was altered. Our social system was adversely affected. Islamic education was totally at the mercy of financial help of the affluent Muslim class and the Islamic institutions could only be kept alive with their assistance. The Government did not accept the graduates of these institutions in their employment. On the contrary, the system of education which the Britishers enforced divested the minds of the Muslims of the concept of Allah, His Prophet (peace be upon him) and the Life Hereafter, but the avenues of worldly gains had been left open to them only. All this we inherited from the British era. It is a pity that after the establishment of Pakistan no effort was made to change this situation. In fact our position in the last thirty years has become worse. It cannot be expected that if an Islamic government is now established it will at once restore the ideal system. What can, of course, be done to begin with is that the reins of government are given in the hands of the right type of people. They should utilise all the resources of the country, all the media of publicity, entire system of education and the overall administrative policy of the government for one singular purpose of spreading Islam extensively among the Muslims and for the reformation of their moral condi-

tion. The ground for Islamic System will be prepared to the extent to which knowledge of Islam is disseminated and the moral standard of the masses is improved.

At the time of the establishment of Pakistan this is what we had expected. We had hoped that at the end of the British Rule, when the reins of Pakistan's government will come in the hands of the Muslims, they will set themselves to this task. We had thought that the government will utilise all its media of publicity for the invigoration of their faith and fostering in them the true Islamic character. We had aspired that the educational system will be geared to the production of the leadership and citizens worthy of an Islamic state and society. We had hoped that the educational system, which generated atheism, will be supplanted by a system which would develop devotion and submission to Allah. We had wished that a sense will be created among the people whereby they would be able to discriminate between the lawful and the unlawful. But, as ill luck would have it, none of these hopes came true. Had the government then utilised all its resources to this end the situation would have been quite different by now.

We have now to start afresh. It is very well if you try to enforce the Islamic Laws. You may also codify them so that our courts are able to decide according to them. But this is not the only thing whereby Islamic system will be established.

The first and foremost thing is that Islamic education is imparted in our educational institutions at all levels, in primary and high schools as well as in colleges and

universities. Instead of propagating obscenity, moral turpitude and crime, our mass-media should be employed for imparting faith and Islamic beliefs among the Muslims. The common people should be made to understand as to what is Islamic character and what is un-islamic one, and what is the distinction between them. I have already explained that Islamic System was established on the bed rock of faith It was on that strong founda tion that the edifice of moral, social, economic, political and legal system was erected. If today we wish to achieve that ideal we must return to it in the same order. Mere change of law will not be of much avail unless the faith in Allah, faith in His Prophet (peace be upon him), faith in the Quran and the faith in the Life Hereafter is firmly established in the hearts of Muslim masses. We know very well that our police is so proficient in the fabrication of false cases that it can challenge the whole world on this score. The condition of our witnesses is such that giving of true evidence is almost deemed a sin. People think that court is but a place of false evidence. Police always keeps at hand a gang of false witnesses. Keeping these two things in view, one can imagine as to how can the Islamic Law be successfully enforced when the whole machinery of our society is in disorder. The present regime, and the future ruler of the country, should see to it that along with the enforcement of Islamic Laws they also reform the administration of the country, the system of its education and put all the energies and resources of the country to the task of establishing faith in the hearts of the

Muslims. The character of the people should be improved and fear of Allah be ingrained in their minds.

Nasir Qureshi

Sir, it is generally said that our nation submits to the rod only. It is a popular proverb and is now-a-days on every body's lips. But do you think that Islamic System will also be established by force.

Maulana Abul A'la Maududi

Force also has a place in Islamic Law but it comes last. The order of precedence in Islamic System is that first of all the minds of the people are reformed through education and preaching so that their outlook is changed. Then a gigantic effort is made to create Islamic character in them. This campaign has to be so arranged that every locality, every village and every street develops such a group of noble men, who, with the support of the general public, are in a position to suppress the bad element of the society and can strive to make the people of their own area religious and honest. In this way a popular opinion will emerge in the country which will not allow the evils prosper. If any one would dare to deviate in the face of this popular public opinion, he will be encountered with condemnation. While on the other hand, any one, who will adopt the right course of life, would be helped by the whole society. Islam also visualises that its members are sympathetic and helpful to each other. They share each other's troubles. Every one is supporter of justice and an opponent of injustice. One considers eating his fill unlawful if he knows that his neighbour is sleeping hungry.

Islam also establishes such economic system in which interest is unlawful, Zakat is obligatory, the doors of unlawful income are closed and people are given full opportunities for earning a lawful income and no one stands deprived of his necessities of life. Force is used only as a last resort if one is not reformed by faith, character, education, justice, better economic condition and the pressure of healthy public opinion. And when it comes to that stage the force should be used openly and so mercilessly that it deters all criminal tendencies.

Some people ignore the full scheme and details of the Islamic system and outright start criticising its harsh punishments. Islam starts with creating faith among ordinary people, then it builds their character and takes steps to prepare a strong public opinion which fosters good and suppresses evil. Then it establishes such a social, economic and political order in which doing of a good deed is easier than doing a bad one. It shuts all doors through which the various abominable crimes penetrate. After all these things force is used to serve as a deterrent for wiping out every evil that crops up in a clean society. Who would be more unjust than a person who skips over all these things and places the last of its item on the top only to disgrace this righteous system.

Abdul Waheed Khan

What you have said about the government is undoubtedly very true. We cannot attain our ideal of Islamic rule until we create an order and with such leadership who are not only honest and sincere about the enforcement

of Islam but also intellectually and morally men of such calibre and standard as can accomplish this task. The question which arises here is that now-a-days election is considered to be the only means of changing a government. Will you please enlighten us whether, in view of the glorious regime of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him), this Western system of election can be harmonised with the Islamic System of Shura (consultation)? If so how ?

Maulana Abul A'la Maududi

You will please keep it in mind that we shall have to start from the point where we are and keep our destination distinctly clear before us so that with each step we march towards it. Whether we like it or not, the elections shall have to be a starting point, because this is at present the only peaceful course for changing the system of government and rulers. There is no other alternative for bringing about a change in the system of government and choosing leaders for running it. Our efforts should therefore be that our elections are fair and free from deceit, bungling, racial and regional prejudices, sectional and tribal considerations, false propaganda, mud-slinging, bogus voting, conscience-buying and other mal-practices which are employed for changing the result of elections. People should have full opportunity to elect representatives of their own choice. Parties and inividuals, who contest elections, should present their manifestos in a decent manner before the public and then leave the choice to them. It is possible that in the first election we may not fully succeed in changing the people's mode of

thinking or choice, but if the system of election is kept clean a time is bound to come when the government would be completely in the hands of honest men. Thereafter we can review the system of election and succeed in re-establishing the ideal Islamic method originally adopted for this purpose. You cannot, in any case, attain your goal at once and immediately.

Abdul Waheed Khan

Sir, there can be many other questions which I would wish you to illuminate but I defer them to some other suitable occassion. May Allah grant you health and provide us an opportunity to have your guidance about them. But before this session comes to a close I would ask you one more question. You had a mission which you made the sole aim of your life. You have struggled for it all your life. Thank God we have today reached a stage where that objective appears to be near its completion. Will you please tell us in the context of your struggle as to how do you feel about this whole situation? Do you think that your struggle has really come to its logical conclusion and do you feel you have been really successful in your mission?

Maulana Abul A'la Maududi

It is a very difficult question indeed. Neither I want to make any exaggerated claim nor would I like to indulge in self-praise. Nevertheless, I feel that in the last thirty to forty years the work of propagation of Islamic thought has been done on a vast scale. It has not been done by me only. Many

others have also contributed to it. As a result of this vast literature majority of our educated class has developed a love for Islam. Although their moral standards do not yet conform to the teaching of Islam, but generally there is a growing urge for understanding it and establishing its system in them. Our educational institutions, though they thrived on Macaulay's system of education, have, by the Grace of Allah, produced a large number of students who have not only a passion for Islam but a good deal of its understanding also. The great problem we have now before us is that how should we disseminate the knowledge and understanding of Islam among our masses, who are, mostly illiterate. The educated class alone, even with its hundred per cent votes and immense desire to make a correct choice of representatives, cannot succeed in achieving the desired results in elections.

At this stage it seems to me but essential that educated young men and religious scholars devote themselves to the task of acquainting the illiterate masses all over the country, in cities, towns and villages, with Islam. Literacy is not essential for this purpose. During the time of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) Islam was not spread through books but by verbal preaching. Even now it is not necessary that we first teach reading and writing and then acquaint them with Islam. Its knowledge can be imparted to the people through verbal preaching as was done in the days of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him). They can be acquainted with the Islamic beliefs and ethics. They

can be made to understand their duties as muslims. They can be made to distinguish between the lawful and the unlawful. Fear of the punishment of great sins can be created in their minds. Reward for good deeds can still work as a great incentive for them. The teachings of the Quran and the Sunnah, which had changed the world, can show its miraculous effects if we want to make use of them for the reformation of our society. One thing, of superb importance, is that by means of simple teachings of the Quran and Sunnah we should stamp the impression in the minds of the people that they can conceal themselves from everyone but not from Allah. They can escape every punishment except the punishment of Allah. They can be exhorted that they have to die one day and appear in the court of Allah, on the Day of Resurrection. It is not possible that they go before Him after they have ignored the prayer, disgraced His Religion by flouting the Fast of Ramzan, polluted themselves with sins, encroached the rights of other people, molested others' honour and committed murders, and still hope that they will be forgiven. Device and deceit may help them escape the punishment in this world but would they also escape the punishment in the Hereafter? If these things are poured in the minds of people, you will see that they would also develop right type of thinking and moral sense.

After that when people come to know that we have to establish the Islamic System in our country they would think themselves, at the time of election, whom they should bring forth for the task. Ordinary people

know which doctor to consult when they are ill. They also know which pleader to engage for a law suit. Similarly when you would create an understanding and awareness of Islam among the masses, they would themselves judge whom they should elect for running the Islamic System. Even if they err, on this score, in the first instance, they will not, God willing, err a second time, provided the process of mass education continues and the conduct of rulers is subjected to logical criticism whenever they deviate in any matter from the Islamic System. If we suppose that once a majority of wrong persons is elected it would manipulate the elections a second time, they will be faced with a similar movement which uprooted a dictator like Bhutto.

There are some special ways of mass education which shall have to be kept in view. For example we take up the case of labour unions. Itshould be impressed on the labour that for them the most judicious economic system is not socialism but Islam. Their grievances would be removed by adherence to Islam. Socialism have never been fair to the labour class. Neither it is doing justice to them now nor would it ever do in the future. Our young men who have studied Socialism and Communism and know the conditions obtaining in these countries can, with irrefutable arguments and evidence, convince the labourers on this point. In this way labour movement can be transformed into an Islamic movement. With the awareness thus created, the labour class will be in a position to recognise whether their leaders were the followers of Marx and Lenin or

the believers of Allah and His Prophet (peace be upon him). Then the decision that, on the Day of Resurrection they would like to be raised with Marx and Lenin or the Prophet of Allah (peace be upon him), can be left to them.

A similar approach is needed in the case of farmers, who have their own particular problems. The solution which Islam offers for their problems should be explained to them. When the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) migrated to Madina, its local population was engaged mostly in agriculture. Before the advent of Islam they were deeply affected by disputes which involved landlords, farmers and tenants. The farmers who brought grain from villages were badly exploited by the urban grain-dealers and commission agents. When the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) went there, he removed all these evils. The details of the reforms which he made are available in the Sunnah. These instances can be quoted to the farmers and they can be convinced that judicious solution of these problems had been made by Islam in the past and it could solve them now also.

As this work will progress, you will see that gradually the result of elections would improve. And as the number of honest and wise religious men will increase we will advance towards the Ideal System which obtained in the times of the early Caliphs.

Nasir Qureshi

Sir, I would here ask you a question that has come to my mind. You have just now told us that Islamic System should be enforced gradually and that is how it will

actually be enforced. Does it mean that during the course of this gradual transition our present laws, made under the Western type of democracy will also continue? Can these two conflicting things go together?

Maulana Abul A'la Maududi

Our whole system of life is in disorder and it will have to be changed gradually. The British system of education cannot be replaced with Islamic system immediately. The moral condition of the public which has deteriorated over decades due to the onslaught of cinema, obscene pictures, songs, mixed society, drinking and other evils, cannot also be remodelled by one stroke. But we shall have to start our efforts for change at once. We must wipe out whatever evil we can, and do this in the shortest possible time. It would be unjust to delay our action even by a moment. We shall have to take a similar course in respect of laws. Which of the un-Islamic laws can be replaced by Islamic Laws immediately, should be changed forthwith. Every Islamic Law, the enforcement of which is possible, should be enforced without delay, because a government which is truly Muslim, and has before it the mission of putting Islam into practice, should bring a simultaneous change in every sphere of life. It is fallacious to think that Islamic Law should not be enforced until all the reforms have been completed. If our judges start deciding suits according to Islamic Laws, instead of un-Islamic Laws, it will create an impression in the public mind that secular system will not work here any more and our religious laws are.

going to replace it. This will help in changing the very way of thinking of our public. You can understand its effect from the fact that when the Britishers abandoned our laws and enforced their own, and their magistrates and judges started deciding cases according to the new laws, our values gradually began to change. What was unlawful became lawful and what was lawful became otherwise. Things which the British law made lawful in moral, economic, social and other spheres of life, became a part of our system of life, even though they were prohibited from Islamic point of view. We began to think that our laws were outdated. It was ingrained in our minds that the Islamic Law was only meant for marriage, divorce and inheritance purposes only and was unfit for running other affairs of life. When people will see the Islamic Law operating in our courts the history will repeat itself and the spell of English Law over us will begin to fade. It is, therefore, not correct to think that reforms should be made in one or a few spheres of life and other spheres should remain as they are.

Let us take the case of elections. Apparently it is just one aspect of life but its improvement influences the whole system. The system of election as in vogue in our country involves innumerable evils. False promises, deceit, exploitation of voter's weaknesses, purchase of votes, pressurising, vilification, regional and tribal prejudices, sectarianism are the evils which are let loose for winning the elections and riding over the nation's neck. Change this situation, put a stop to these devices and give the people an opportunity to

elect their representatives in a free and fair manner. Rest assured that a good deal of improvement will result with this measure alone. It will make the elections of bad people difficult and good people easier.

Nasir Qureshi

Sir, we are already using the different media for the publicity and preaching of Islam. What else would you suggest for this purpose ?

Maulana Abul A'la Maududi

I have already discussed these things at some length in my books and it is rather difficult for me to repeat this all over again.

Nasir Qureshi

Sir, will you please tell us as to how can we use the radio for this purpose ?

Maulana Abul A'la Maududi

In order to use the radio for this purpose it is essential that such persons are selected who can speak to the people on radio on various Islamic subjects after due preparation. For example, some such carefully selected persons should be requested to explain the Islamic beliefs with all their implications and try to engrave their every aspect in the minds of people. This task should not be limited to any one person, howsoever learned, because it will result in monotony and the people will get tired of him. If it is done by different persons in their own style, the audience will listen to their programmes with greater interest. Once the people imbibe the fundamentals of Islamic beliefs which is the first and foremost thing on the road to Islam it will change their mental make-

up and make them receptive for other facts of Islam. Similarly, some other capable persons should be selected to explain the importance of Islamic prayers, discuss their countless moral and mundane benefits and high-light the calamities that result from neglecting them. Another group of suitable persons should be selected who should discuss the ethics of Islam, its injunctions and its exhortations. Another team of learned persons should launch a campaign against the evils rampant in the society in. such an effective manner that public begins to feel a strong repulsion against the sins they indulge in. Some others can take up the major sins as their subject. They should take these sins one by one and launch an incessant and virulent attack against it in their speeches so as to create in the public mind a horror against these sins and their woeful punishment in the life-to-come. For instance they can take up 'murder'. as their first subject. They should recount one by one all the consequences which result from it. A person killing ten or more of his fellow-beings, if caught, would be punished in this world with death once only. For nine other murders, which have also been committed by him, he will be punished by Allah in the Hereafter. Even in the case of murder of a single individual the punishment from a court of this world will be a sentence of death only, whereas the loss which the bereaved family and his future generations suffer, and the length of time for which they will suffer, can neither be exactly measured nor redressed by any worldly court. The assessment of this loss

will be made by Allah and the murder will have its full retribution in Hell. If we start such a series of speeches on the radio, and competent persons do it with full eloquence at their command, you will see that within a short time a remarkable change will occur. Radio is indeed a most effective medium for educating the masses. It has become so wide spread that even a farmer now cannot plough his farm without it. Our people have so far been listening to music and mostly obscene film songs. If they are gradually accustomed to listen to the teachings of Islam couched in simple and inerest-ing language, I do not think that they will switch off their radios on hearing the name of Allah. They have not yet reached that stage of allergy. They may be very short of practice. But all of them love and believe in Almighty Allah, His Prophet (peace be upon him) and the life Hereafter. In order to create interest, you can start your programme with some moving incidents from the times of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) and the Caliphs and the compa-nions of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) and other noble men of our history. Gradually they can be mentally prepared to listen and understand the teachings of Islam. Perhaps there will not be even one single person among these simple villagers who is not be a true lover of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him). You can then tell them, to also obey the orders of that beloved Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) of theirs for whom they are always ready to lay down their lives. You will not find even a single person among them who would

not believe that there would be another life after this earthly life. You should tell them as to what will happen after death and quote its details from the Quran and the Sunnah. I am sure that these details will have a hair-raising effect on them. The knowledge of the torments of grave alone will shake them to the marrow of their bones.

Nasir Qureshi

Sir, we present from the radio special programmes for the farmers, labourers, ladies and children. And we do not present in these programmes songs only. It is something quite different that the contents of these programmes are not proportionate?

Maulana Abul A'la Maududi

What I am saying is that the main feature of the radio programme is music. The element of religion and morality is much less in it. If you stop the former element at once, your listeners would switch on to other radio stations. So the right course would be that you reduce gradually the former and increase the latter element.

When public begins to understand their religion in a proper manner, and you present it to them in an interesting and effective way, they would no longer remain so much addicted to songs and other corruptive pastimes. Whenever they will switch-on to other stations for music they would suddenly remember that on the Day of Resurrection, their ears will bear witness to what they had listened and their conscience will be disturbed.